The people of Nagano are farmers. The seat of their extended families is in Naha and Shuri, and they have their own local deity places (ujigami in Japanese). The people of Minatogawa are fishermen, their extended family seats are in Itoman. They too have their local deities and many of their religious ceremonies are centered around the gods of the sea and the dragon of the sea god's palace.

The population of Minatogawa, as of December 31, 1951, was 1108 (515 males, 593 females) in 213 households, an average of 5.2 persons per household, and of adjoining Nagano, 564 persons (262 males, 302 females) with 113 households, an average of 5.0 persons per household.

The fishing village of Minatogawa is believed to be about 250 years old. It was founded, according to local residents, by the fishermen of Itoman who were accustomed to fish off shore near the islands around the southeastern and southwestern parts of Okinawa. The place was first established as a temporary location for the fishing boats and later permanent settlement took place. The tombs of Itoman are still the ultimate burying ground for large numbers of the Minatogawa fishermen. After 250 years the ties with the parent town are still strong.

The village has two traditions involving contacts with other peoples. The first is concerned with the Chinese. One is a spot on the shore where some Chinese are said to have landed over 200 years ago. Many fishermen pray to it on certain occasions of the year. Little is known of what happened to the Chinese, but supposedly they were buried high up the side of a steep mountain nearby, inside a cave with stalactites. Bones said to be of these Chinese may still be seen there. The cave is difficult of access.

There is also the tradition of London sailors said to have been shipwrecked at the port of Kiyan on the southwest tip of Okinawa. A child was born of the union of one of these sailors with an Okinawan woman and the sailor later returned to England. The tomb of the woman and the child is revered as a religious site. It is now a small shrine on the outskirts of Itoman called Rondongama, Rondon for London.[9] Old women of Minatogawa sing a song of this old love called Michinakankai. The theme of the song is the unashamed love of the woman for her departed London lover, an Okinawan anticipation of Madame Butterfly.

In this area the low, bare hills form in a haphazard way a series of valleys, some long and narrow, others like an amphitheatre with an open face to the sea. Low passes connect the valleys. One such pass, about 150 feet high, now on Highway 64, leads from the valley of

[Text Continues on Top of P. 53--Analyst]

9 The writer visited both the cave and the site near Itoman town in August 1951. The shrine is now situated on a small hill on the outskirts of Itoman. The bones were moved here during the war from Maisato village to escape Japanese bombing. A large cave nearby, associated with the mother and the child, is overgrown and very dangerous to enter because of the danger of snakes.

621 614 villages studied, these frequencies of families with the same surname are very high. The seat of these extended families of the Minatogawa fishermen is in almost every instance the town of Itoman. The tombs [764] of Minatogawa are entirely different from those of the neighboring agricultural communities. They are small and temporary tombs for keeping remains that will later be removed to the large, often dramatically situated extended family tombs of Itoman. One resident of Minatogawa aptly described his village as a "bunke (branch family) of Itoman."

463 621 614 This is an unusual situation and can not be fully explained except by a study of Itoman and the smaller fishing villages scattered throughout Okinawa Island. One explanation might be that historically Okinawans have been farmers, and that, while they are excellent fishermen, they have not as a people participated in large numbers in fishing, leaving this activity to definite groups, such as the people of Itoman town. The passing down of occupations of the father to the son, the infrequency of change in occupation, especially from agriculture to fishing, the establishment of daughter villages, such as Minatogawa, might account for the fact that fishing is the occupation of a compact group of families who have intermarried and continued in their traditional occupations. Even in Matsuda, to the north, the temporary colonies of fishermen are either Itoman people or are their descendants. (There are of course a few local farmers who do some fishing). The close ties between Minatogawa and its parent town of Itoman illustrate the persistence of occupational and social relationships over a period of two and a half centuries.

614 Certain exceptions to the usual practice in Minatogawa accentuate the closeness of extended family relationships between Itoman and Minatogawa. As an illustration, we may take the case of three related families in Minatogawa who are not fishermen. The head of one family is a retired farmer, his son is a school teacher, and a third is a distant relative who is a stone cutter. These people, formerly members or descendants of members of the nobility, came from Shuri. The main house of their extended family is in Shuri. This contemporary extended family now has so many members that the places for reunions and meetings have been increased, since the site of the main house in Shuri, founded by the original ancestor, can no longer accommodate all the members. The places of worship are divided into the main place, (umuta in Okinawan) and intermediate places [778] (nakamutu in Okinawan). Some of these secondary places of worship are in nearby Naha. The number of these cases is small compared with the closely knit ties of the fishermen's families with Itoman town.

In Matsuda, the extended family operates as it does in Hanashiro, the former town, there is an illustration of another point regarding the extended family system: the identity of a family name with a village name. Historically, the family took the name of the place; the place did not receive the name of the family. Though the situation is not clear, it [565] would seem that when the king made grants of land to nobles that they adopted the name given by the king to the place, while commoners did not receive surnames, but were known by their household rank order -- to be explained in Section 8. The village of Matsuda, for example, is the seat

fortune teller. The purpose of this visit is to discover who would be a good adopting parent. The fortune teller advises the parents to select a person born under the same year sign as the child. These year signs roughly correspond to the signs of the zodiac. The twelve signs with their Japanese equivalents are: rat (ne), ox (ushi), tiger (tora), hare or rabbit (u), dragon (tatsu), snake (mi), horse (uma), sheep hitsuji), monkey (saru), bird (tori), dog (inu), and hog or boar (i). The year 1951 was the year of the hare; 1952 is the year of the dragon (tatsudoki).

The adopting or "growing up" parent is older, in multiples of 12, than the child. After consulting almanacs and other materials, the fortune teller advises the parents to find a person in the village born under the same year sign as the child. Prospective adopting parents are then sought out and the matter is discussed with them. Both parents may do this, but most often the discussions are carried on by the mother. When the selection is made, the child is "given" to the adopting parent, and there are prayers before the Buddhist god shelf in the home of the adopting parent.

Actually the child continues to live with its own parents, but makes frequent visits to the home of the adopting parent. There are no stated intervals at which these visits are made, except for New Years and O-Bon. The adopting parent may on these visits give food and presents to the child.

The arrangement thus seems to be a form of sponsorship and guardianship without special responsibilities on the part of the adopting parent, to bring good health and long life to the child. It has only slight resemblances to the godfather and godmother in Christian countries who sponsor a child at his baptism and theoretically at least undertake to be responsible for his Christian training. But the sponsorship and guardianship features are somewhat similar.

Adoption of this type may be done in Okinawa by either sex. Generally old women are the favorites and they may have many such adopted children. But old or older men may also assume this obligation. This form of "growing up" adoption existed in all the villages studied in substantially the same form.

8

## The Household Order Naming System

Families in a village have, in addition to their own surnames, secondary names by which individual families are known. This secondary naming system is a device to distinguish related families with the same surname from one another.

The secondary naming system is known as "the household order," or yagō in Japanese. To introduce this discussion, it might be well to

139 311 [417] settled area and for protection of the surrounding crops. Around houses, there are common stone fences, bamboo fences and trees. Stone fences, though solid may be toppled over. Bamboo, or dwarf bamboo fences, seemingly slight, resist the winds and remain intact because of their flexible loose weave.

139 133 185 [178] [177] [173] The trees on the ridges of the low lying hills or on high pieces of ground are tall, and sturdy, and jealously protected. The villagers take great pride in them. Today this pride is based on the realisation of their effectiveness; in former times, their protection was associated with the worship of the gods of the sacred grove (utaki). There were beliefs, which now seem to be dying out, that cutting these trees would bring bad luck. Many villagers say that Saion in the 18th century intentionally invented superstitions concerned with the cutting of the trees in order to save them. Now these trees are no longer in danger of cutting, even though the penalties of the old beliefs are no longer feared.

The following short list does not exhaust the kinds of trees and plants found in this area. It is confined to those trees, shrubs, and grasses which are most frequently found and which have the greatest local importance.

824 313 (1) The Ryukyuan pine (Riukiu-matsu in Japanese, Pinus luchuensis Mayr). This tree is still one of the commonest sights of the island, even in southern Okinawa. At present, it is a source of firewood, cheap lumber, and siding. It is not considered good housebuilding material because of termites (shiroari). Pine was used for fishing boats within living memory, but now they are made of much harder woods. In this area, the coniferous groves are along the seashore. The larger stands are not cut. Scrub pine on individually owned wild land may be cut for firewood.

(2) The fukugi (Darcinia spicata Hook.). The fukugi is used around homes and on mountain ridges as a typhoon protection. It is fairly plentiful here and prized as a building material (kenchikuzai). The hard studs, beams and cross beams and the wide plank floors in the older and better houses are often made out of this wood.

(3) The iju (Schima luchuensis Nak.). This tree, common here, is used as a building material and is considered to be better than the Japanese redwood (sugi). It is not regarded as a good firewood.

(4) The inumaki (Podocarpus macrophyllum D. Don). This tree is not well known here, and there are no large specimens. But it is regardod as the best building material when available. Often the large, hard, rough hewn poles which are placed on stones and support the eaves of the older houses are made from this wood.

(5) The shii (Shiia cuspidata). The dense stands of this tree in the village owned forest restrict the size of the specimens, though

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

wood and lumber for Japanese army uses and for air raid shelters were in demand, (2) the burning in the course of the war, and (3) the intense cutting after the war for firewood and rebuilding.

Okinawan traditions relating to forest care have a positive value and it is worth while to recapitulate them here. Local old men and antiquarians in Matsuda give credit to Saicn who wrote a long treatise on agriculture and is said to have intentionally devised superstitions to save trees. Death or misfortune would come to him who cut the trees, especially those in sacred groves or on the tops of mountains. Some local residents have said that the gods of the mountain are really not of religious inspiration at all, but had their origin in the conscious desire of Saicn to save the trees. While there does not seem to be any truth in this assertion, since these deities of the sacred groves and mountain tops reach far back into antiquity, there is no doubt that sacred groves and houses of the mountain gods saved trees that otherwise would have been cut down. (In China and Japan, religious shrines and holy places have also been areas of the preservation of trees).

Present attitudes were summarized by a Matsuda school principal who said that beliefs in mountain gods and in death and misfortune following cutting trees were dying out, and that these old beliefs had been replaced by awareness of the scientific reasons for preserving the trees.

In Matsuda, pride in the trees, in the groves that line its hill tops and overlook the narrow valleys and ravines planted to rice and other crops is a conspicuous part of village experience. There are trees along the main road near the town that are said to have been planted in Saicn's time under his inspiration.

These favorable traditions are helpful. They do not guarantee the preservation of the forests. Previous experience has shown this. From what may be surmised of the history of Okinawan forests, the destruction of modern times has been correlated with war and the expansion of economic activities. We may speculate, too, that previous deforestation was slow, inexorable and related to the clearing of accessible stands near settlements, and the extension of these settled areas as they grew. "Most of the accessible primitive forests have been exhausted," Dr. Green wrote in his report to Commodore Perry.11 The need for fuel increases with population. In China, Japan, Korea, and Okinawa, the relation of forests, either as a source for lumber or fuel, to population growth and settlement is a very intimate one. This is a basic consideration in discussing not only the "patterns of culture" but the relation of culture to the natural environment in this part of the world.

11 Hawks, Perry's expedition to Japan, Vol. II, 35

who are less shy, can meet and enjoy one another's company under socially approved conditions. 834

The engagement (uino in Japanese, sakimui in Okinawan) varies with individuals and villages. In this respect it is like the marriage ceremony. A one year engagement period is considered long. In one instance of a formal engagement taken from Hanashiro, the young man goes to the girl's house, taking a small amount of sake with him. The parents of both principals are present. The group makes a short prayer, before the Buddhist god shelf, that the two will be a happy couple. The sake is placed on the god shelf. In Hinatogawa, the prospective groom's parents prepare a small feast, and they and the boy go to the bride's house. The food offering is put on the god shelf. The two young people promise to marry. In another variant, from Hatsuda, the boy takes a food offering and sake to the girl's house. The two eat together and promise to marry at a drink exchange (kampai) in which they alternately sip, as is the custom in Okinawa, out of the same cup. From Hatsuda there was still another variant in which the boy was not involved. His mother met the girl's mother and her female relatives in the girl's house. Sake was given to the relatives of the girl. The girl's mother agreed to give her daughter up, the boy's mother agreed that the prospective daughter-in-law would be received in his family. 584 184 [078 082]

All these variants have this in common, that the engagement symbolizes an act that is more than the decision of two young people. It involves the families as well.

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The tomb is revisited on the 7th day. Rice cakes, bean curd, and a little sake may be taken as offerings. The food items vary. Pork, rice, and tea may be added or substituted. The offering may consist of a variety of favored foods (a gochisō, a feast or a treat). The observances on the 14th, 21st, 28th, 35th, and 42nd day are like the preceding ones, though beginning with the 35th day, the prayers and the food offerings may be more elaborate. [262]

The 49th day has special significance. At this time, the temporary white memorial tablets are removed from the god shelf and burned, and the permanent tablets hung there. This god shelf has the tablets of the immediate family in the male line: the father, grandfather, the mother and grandmother, or of deceased children. A son who establishes a branch family has a god shelf in his own house. While I found no unanimity on the point, many interpreted the 49th day as the day on which the deceased is presumed to have become a god (hotoke-san). Others have said this did not take place until the 33rd year after death, certainly a more logical time, since the observances cease at this time. On the 49th day, there are visits to the tomb and prayers before the god shelf at night. As the last of a series of observances which follow closely after death, the food offerings and the food served to guests are much more sumptuous than those of previous weeks. [778] [776]

In the annual anniversaries, differences depend on family piety and economic status. With some families, observances become more elaborate as the years go by. The prayers and the feast of the 1st and 3rd years are usually the same as that of the 49th day. Beginning with the 7th year the rice may be dyed red. Rice dyed red is used as the years from the date of death increase. In all cases, the 33rd year is the last and the most luxurious of the celebrations. The occasion begins with prayers at the god shelf, the food offering, sake, followed by a banquet for the guests, most of whom are relatives. This 33rd year celebration is the final recognition of a person's life on earth as a member of the family and ends the responsibility for observing the anniversary of his death. 769

Though rare, a family may call on a Buddhist priest to officiate at one of these memorial observances. One service, in memory of a fourth son who had died in the Philippines in 1944, was observed in Minatogawa. The priest received from the father the name, age, and place of death of his son and wrote this information on a piece of paper. The chant began with the tapping of a small bell (inkin), ringing which was repeated frequently throughout the service. The chant, which lasted about 25 minutes, was sung in an archaic Japanese which no one understood. Toward the end, the priest read the paper on which he had written the information regarding the deceased. These were the only words which could be clearly understood. The purpose here was to inform the Buddha of the name of the dead. The priest wore a black robe with gold trimming. Around his neck was a string of beads (zuzu) with a pendant purple tassel. He sat in the front of the first room with the father of the dead boy on his right. The women guests were in the second room. As the long chant continued, people began talking to one another, and when the priest 769 793 788 [292]

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577 better behavior. In one instance from Matsuda, the members of the family talk over their good and bad acts and resolve henceforth to do good.

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[823] In all the villages, the custom of new or young water (wakamizu) has survived. In Hinatogawa, at 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning of the New Year, young children take fresh water in a tea pot to the homes of relatives. The new water is poured into a cup, placed on the Buddhist god shelf, or on the shelf of the fire god in the kitchen. The children are given ¥5 or ¥10 by the relatives, who are then supposed to stay young themselves. In Matsuda, new water is taken from a well early in the morning, and some is put on the god shelf. The first tea of the New Year is made with "young water".

A parent may also give a piece of pork with salt on it to his child announcing that he is now one year older. This custom is still observed, even though ages officially are now reckoned in the western manner.

In all the villages, the morning observances are family affairs; the public nature of the holiday is evident later. Tea and sake are
[769] placed in front of the ancestral tablets on the god shelf. A fresh
[782] kimono is put on and the offering is made before breakfast. Then the father takes the sake from the god shelf, offering sips first to his wife and then to the children.

[708] Later there are visits to the place of the patron deity or first ancestor of the village (ujigami). In Hanashiro, all of the people make this visit. In Hinatogawa, it is also a village affair, but is more involved because there are more places to go: a local religious site of unknown origin, the palace of the gods of the sea (ryūgū), the supposed place of the mountain god, the three wells with their god places, and finally to the places of the two patron deities. In Matsuda, the village head man, accompanied by surviving minor
[793] priestesses (formerly in the noro order) make visits to the place of the patron deity. But whether all the villagers or only their representatives take part, the visits have the same meaning: to offer thanks to the founders of the village.

The New Year is a time for extended family reunions. If the home site of the extended family is not in the village, the family or a representative may go to the reunion in another village, if it is not too far away. Only members of the extended family attend these celebrations.

With early morning observances in the home, the public ceremonies, and the extended family reunions over, the gay, informal and public
[524] part of the holiday begins. Hospitality is offered on all sides, and there is much drinking among the men. The celebration continues for the rest of the first day and through the second. The third day is a transitional day whose theme is the need of returning to work. This is hachiharu (to begin farming). The day is given over to more feasting and drinking and to some actual or token work.

3

## Celebrations Through the Festival of the Fifth Month

796 The 15th day of the second lunar month (March 22, 1951) is the Buddhist holiday, higan, celebrating the spring equinox. Here it is a home festival of thanksgiving. Barley (Ōmugi) or barley cakes [262] with brown sugar are offered with prayers for continued good fortune. Other grains, such as rice, millet (awa) may be offered, though the cakes (mugimochi) are of barley. In Matsuda, this is not a home ceremony. An offering of white rice cakes is made by the village [193] head man, with the assistance of lower orders of the former priestess system, at the site of the village patron deity.

527 The third day of the third month is the festival of the dolls, [524] (hinamatsuri). It is not important in Okinawa and is spottily ob- [562] served. In Minatogawa, it is a woman's holiday. Women and children make dolls. Gifts of dainties and candies in red lacquer boxes are prepared. People from nearby villages come to Minatogawa, bring their lunches, and gather shells and catch fish.

The fifth day of the fifth month is Boy's Day. This Japanese holiday is not significant in the villages. There may be banners with a picture of a carp (koi no bori) displayed, visits to the place of the patron deity, some visiting and samisen playing, and perhaps a play.

527 The 14th day of the 5th month (June 18, 1951) is the festival 526 of the Gods of the Sea and is observed only in Minatogawa. It is this village's greatest celebration. The boat race, held on this day, attracts many from the interior villages. In Hanashiro, most activity ceases while everyone goes to the boat races. Before the [178] races, the villagers go to the religious sites to make small offerings [182] and to pray. The races are held in the estuary of the river. In their excitement, children with infants on their back often wade out in the water to cheer their favorite boat.

796 The Festival of the Fifth Month (Gogatsumatsuri) is held on the 15th day of the 5th lunar month (June 19, 1951). Like the festival of the [193] spring equinox, it is a day of thanksgiving. Thanks are given for rice instead of for barley. In Matsuda, the ceremony is conducted by the village head man and former members of the priestess system.[2]

[114] [825] 2 According to a Matsuda informant, women should not sew on this day. It is a rest day. If work is done, including gathering plants for fertilizer, the dreaded poisonous snake, the habu, will come. These customs were not encountered in the other villages.

The only Buddhist priest in the areas studied was at the small village of Maegawa, within walking distance of Hinatogawa and Hanashiro. He was a priest of the Jōdo sect (Jōdoshu), one of the important sects of Japan, and stressing salvation by faith. The sect of the priest in this village is of no importance, since the rural people now or before the war had neither the interest nor the capacity for doctrinal distinctions. The temples of this sect were burned during the war, including one in the village of Kochinda, a junction point between Naha and Gushichan.

Before the war the colors of the robes varied with the sect and with the position of the priest in the hierarchy. In the Jōdo sect, the lowest grade wore black, followed up the scale by orange, blue or green, a chocolate reddish brown, and purple, the highest. This contrasts sharply with the priest's present improvisations. His is the black robe of the Shinshu sect. It is a summer garment, made of soft light silk called shiya and resembles a man's kimono, but is longer and sweeps the floor. The garment hangs straight down and is not gathered or tucked. The only other religious possessions were a bell and a badly soiled print of the Buddha (oshaku) which hung in his room.

Before the war, some people in the Gushichan area requested the services of a priest at funerals. After the war, the people of Hanashiro, and other villages as well, decided because of the expense, to forego the services of a priest.

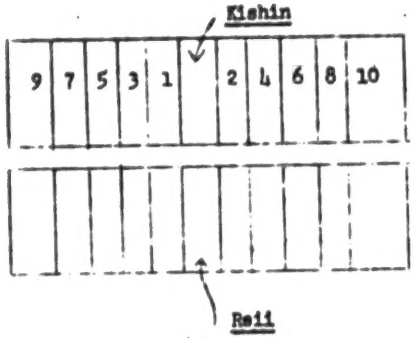
Occasionally this priest officiates when the bones in the temporary tombs of Hinatogawa are moved to the extended family tomb at Itoman, or in a ceremony honoring a death anniversary. Few Okinawans became priests. This priest is a native of Japan, one of the few remaining Japanese priests in the island. At eleven, he entered a Buddhist temple (tera) and has been engaged in religious activity ever since. Now about 50, he has a wife and two children; his head is unshaved and the hair is of a conventional cut. He does not depend on the priesthood for a living, but is employed as an official in a village office.

The situation with regard to Buddhism was quite similar in Matsuda, although there is no priest in the vicinity. There is little doubt, if the villages studied are typical, that this already moribund religion is disappearing altogether here, choked off by lack of temples, lack of priests, and by indifference.

It is not so with household Buddhism, if this term may be used to describe ceremonies and beliefs centering around the Buddhist god shelf or family altar (butsudan). This household altar is in the second room of every home. Around it collect the sentimental memories of the past, such as family pictures, photographs of young soldiers and dearly loved relatives. Prayers and offerings of food and drink to the dead are made before it.

An important part of the Buddhist altar is a frame holding the memorial tablets for the family dead. These tablets (ihai) are pieces

of wood lacquered red and lettered in gold. The frame has an upper section for the male dead and a lower for the female. The date of death is written on the back of each tablet. In the center of each section is a strip with a Chinese character written on it. The upper or male section has the character, kishin, with a meaning similar to returning to the source (moto ni kaeru). The lower or female section has the character reii, suggesting that your spirit is in this place. The tablets are placed in an order, the first to the left of the middle character, the second to the right, so that the last placed ones are toward the outer edge.




(Arrangement of the Memorial Tablets (ihai)

The frequent occasions throughout the year when devotions are made at the altar have already been described in many of the preceding pages. These can be summarized by saying that offerings and prayers are made (1) to commemorate important dates in an individual's life, like birth, the first birthday, engagement, marriage, death, and the anniversary of a death, (2) during holidays and festivals in which honoring the dead and thanksgiving are dominant themes, and (3) at times of individual and private religious worship or prayer. Some women pray daily after placing a cup of tea, a bowl of rice and a burning charcoal stick on the altar. Others observe the 1st and the 15th of the lunar month.

This household Buddhism, centering around the altar, has no institutional basis. There are no Buddhist temples in any of the villages. Family worship at the altar is both an honoring of the ancestral dead and also, it would seem, an acceptance of the merciful and humane doctrines of the Buddhist faith. Buddhism traditionally is the religion of consolation at death. The fact that ancestor worship takes place at the Buddhist altar, however, does not mean that this is a religion in a doctrinal sense. One has been grafted on to the other.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

4

## Ancestor Worship

"Ancestor worship" has been used to describe the devotion to the spirit of the dead and the long continued remembrance of them by the living. While it is too deeply intrenched to be changed, the term is not satisfactory. It is really the worship of those who precede one in death, and these may be ascendants or descendants. The term, "ancestor worship," also conceals the fact that there is a partnership of the living and the dead, which, continued by the living generation in the production of children, will carry over in the future, so that family continuity from the remote past to the remote future is never broken. It is, in the phrase of John Hubbard, "a chain of worship,"[2] not merely the worship of the past and of the dead. But whether in the popular mind these two conceptions, worship of the dead and the family as a continuity, are closely and consciously related is impossible for me to say. The two ideas exist side by side on the level of feeling: to respect one's ancestors and to have children.

Another form of ancestor worship occurs in observances honoring the first ancestor or the founder of the village. Each village has a place of the guardian god (ujigami), located on the supposed site where the founder of the village first settled, which perpetuates the memory of the founder, who may, in some cases, also be the first ancestor of a family living in the village. (It has been suggested that the ujigami also might be related historically to the fire deity). Ceremonies at the place of the village guardian god have a public character and were often conducted by the priestesses.

Hanashiro. The place of the guardian god, a small building, is located on a plot of village owned land, off the main road at the edge of the settlement where the cultivated land begins. It is not well kept up. There is no attendant or caretaker. When necessary, it is reconstructed by volunteer village effort. Broken stone stairs lead up to the small tile roofed building. Inside, there are 5 stones, about 10 inches on the side and 4 inches thick. Some have thought these also represent the primitive hearth stones associated with worship of the fire god. One villager described it as a woman's deity place. Before the war, emigrants to the South Seas, South America, Manchuria, or Japan and their relatives prayed here for the good health and early return of those departing.

Now there is public worship at the place on several occasions during the year. On the 3rd day of the 3rd month, a woman's holiday, women and children go to the seashore around Hinatogawa, and, on returning, pray at the place of the guardian god. On O-Bon, the village lion appears in front of this site. There is samisen playing and the whole village offers a prayer. (Not all villages have the lion costume.

2 Quoted in L. Cranmer-Byng, The vision of Asia, New York, 1933, 42.

778 796 536 825 One person in front fills in the head and forelegs, another in back provides the rear and hindlegs. The lion, with its human mechanism, is a common sight at festivals and parades. It is a symbol of health and strength worthy of imitation). In the Festival of the Full Moon, during the autumnal equinox, the lion appears again and the whole village participates in prayers before the festivities begin.

778 796 [764] [825] On the 1st and 15th of each lunar month, the headman goes to the place of the guardian god and makes an offering of tea, burns a charcoal stick, and says a prayer. On the 9th day of the 9th lunar month, the village council and the elders assemble before the village burial palanquin (gan), offer prayer at the founder's site and then before the village office where the lion is standing.

Minatogawa. This village has three deity places and various explanations are given for this. Some believe that two of them represent 778 sites of co-founders, a first son, and his younger brother, the second 796 son. The third site is vaguely known as a village god place. It is a small outdoor place of worship on the main village road, with a step and a shelf for charcoal sticks. The founders' sites are located in the center of the settled area, but on different sides of the road. In the site of the second son, there are three stones, shaped like life savers but with a bottom for placing the charcoal sticks, three glasses for tea, and three bottles. The site of the supposed first son, less well kept, has a small altar, four stones, tea cups, and cans for the burning of incense.

778 796 [782] [358] On New Year and at O-Bon, the whole, or substantial portions, of the village pray first at the supposed first son's site, then at the second son's. Prayers are offered also at the roadside deity place. Some of the younger villagers hope that as the older residents die off, the expenses of providing offerings and upkeep for all three can be eliminated and that simpler observances can take place at the roadside shrine. The situation now is complicated by the fact that many people regard themselves as descendants of one or the other co-founder.

778 189 [793] Matsuda. In this village, the founder's site is reached by stairs leading up a hillside. It is in the settled area near a dense growth of trees and shrubs. Close by there is a shed in which the lion skin is kept. In this village the founder's site seemed less important than another religious place, on the main road, in which women of lesser rank in the former priestess system participate in ceremonies. In this village there seems to be less participation by all the people of the village at the place of the guardian or founder deity, and, instead, representatives, like the headman, elders, and the former priestesses [796] conduct the ceremonies at New Year, O-Bon, and at the equinoctial holidays.

The group sat in a circle. The priestess occupied the highest spot, her female assistants somewhat lower places, and the men, for once, in the lowest position. The priestess, her women and the male entourage held public worship on the 15th day of the 5th, the 15th and 16th day of the 6th, and the 10th day of the 8th lunar months. On these days there were prayers for good crops, for freedom from disasters and typhoon damage. On the 10th day of the 8th month, there were special prayers that neither diseases nor epidemics enter Hatsuda. These three periods may be rest days on which the villagers may assemble at the place where the prayers are being offered. Because there is no priestess, these ceremonies are now conducted by former assistants. The meetings are attended by fewer and fewer people and the ceremonies may disappear altogether.

6

Gods of the Fire, Wells, and Sacred Groves

There are also other forms of worship which still survive. These are (1) the god of fire (hi no kami), (2) spirits of the sea, of wells, springs, and groves, and (3) types of fortune telling which blend into religious belief.

Gods of the Fire. In every Okinawan kitchen, there is a place above the stove or hearth dedicated to the kitchen or the fire god. There is no image or personification of the god. Usually the place is a very small shelf on which charcoal sticks are burned for the god of the hearth. This is done by women exclusively. The women may light the sticks daily, but it is more usual for the housewife to perform the observance on the 1st and 15th of the lunar month. This was true of all the villages, and I have never seen a kitchen which lacked a place for the fire god.[7]

Gods of the Well (ido no kami). In Hanashiro, prayers are offered in front of the two public wells on lunar New Year. The whole village does not participate. Two or three older men from each extended family perform the rite. The gods of the well are told that the villagers need water; they are thanked for what they have had, and asked to continue to furnish a plentiful supply.

7 The Shinto god shelf (kamidana) is extremely rare. In my observation, it was present only in the homes of Okinawans who had lived in Japan. One in Hatsuda, located in the first room, had two shelves, on both of which a small urn for burning incense sticks was placed between two flower vases. The place on the left represents the founder, the one on the right, his immediate descendant. The family prays to the Shinto god on the 1st and 15th of the lunar month. The husband and wife pray first, followed by the children. A rice offering is placed on the shelf. On it there was a small figurine of the fox god (inari-san) and a mirror, both Shinto symbols.

Similar worship may take place at a spring (isumi). Near Oushichan village there is a large spring. Stone stairs have been built up, amphitheatre-like, around it. Prayers are offered by villagers, or substantial numbers of them, on New Year and on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month. In daily life, the spring is a favorite place for laundering and bathing.

There are three well gods in Hinatogawa, and they are worshipped at the three public wells scattered throughout the village. The people of the village, or large numbers of them, assemble at these wells for prayer at various times of the year, the most important being on New Year and on boat racing day. Sake and a box of candy are placed before the well as offerings of thanks for water.

This village has also a place for the worship of the sea god. This is a simple stone on a small shelf, on a barren spot of the seashore, scarcely distinguishable from the rocks scattered in natural disarray by the waves. In a high wind, the remains of the offerings and the charcoal sticks are swept out to sea. The most important observance here occurs on the 4th day of the 5th month, the day of the sea festival and the boat races. Fishermen come to the place by boat and make offerings of sharks' fins. On this day, the whole village assembles twice to pray at the spot, once before, and once after the races and the celebration. Individual or family worship is common on New Year and at O-Bon. On the equinoctial holiday of the full moon, the headman, the heads of the neighborhood groups, the council and retired elder men assemble, offer thanks and pray for continued plenty from the sea. Very close to the palace of the sea god, a short round stick of bamboo or of thick miscanthus may be stuck in a pile of rocks. Near the top, a dried fish (usually the ika) tail is placed in a slit. In the center there is a slit for another but larger part of the dried fish.

The palace of the mountain god, though its identity is uncertain, is near the palace of the sea god. It is under an overhanging rock along the seashore. This seems an unusual place for the home of a mountain god, but seafarers may have prayed to the god in thanks for guiding them safely in. It seems now to have fallen into disuse. It is now partially overgrown with pandanus and little is known of the place.

Matsuda. In Matsuda, there are beliefs in well, mountain top, and tree grove spirits. There are 8 wells here and family groups usually divide up and worship at one of the wells. After drinking some of the water, thanks are offered to the well god.

The gods of the mountain top and the tree groves are difficult to understand. Little seems to be known about them locally, and it is difficult to disengage historical from religious elements.

One popular explanation is that these gods were the intentional invention of Saion, the 18th century statesman and authority on forestry and agriculture. But this seems highly unlikely. It is more likely that Saion capitalized on the ancient interdict against cutting down

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

trees of the sacred grove and used old beliefs to preserve the forests. Formerly it was believed that misfortune would come to him who cut a tree in groves sacred to these gods. If the trees were cut, the god would become angry, the person cutting the tree would be the victim of self-induced illness and by worrying about his deed, gradually would become ill, and perhaps die. These sacred groves, whose religious significance is now almost ignored, are arranged to enclose the village from three directions, with the open side on the south. On the north was the sacred grove in the back (ushiro no utaki) or the grove of the white gold mountain (kinpuku utaki in Okinawan). The mountain gods were supposed to live here. On the west was the grove in front (mae no utaki) on the white silver mountain. This was also known as the fire shrine.

The priestesses also had a hand in this worship of the mountain gods. There are about seven of these places of worship now, and there is still a voluntary caretaker, an old woman with tattooed hands, a family priestess (nigami) in the old system. Occasionally one sees an old woman going to a grove to pray. The only other visitors are the farmers who walk along the paths of the grove on their way to the fields.

7

Other Religious Observances

There are a few other observations which may have some interest. Old women use patches of grass or knotted rice straw to ward off the spirits on days when they are thought to be abroad in great numbers. At the festival of the autumnal equinox, knotted or braided grass (shiba) is placed in various parts of the house. In some houses, bunches are suspended from the cross beams, perhaps three or four bunches to the side. They may be placed in the toilet, at the entrance to the house compound, on the water barrel in the kitchen, on the front and back of fishing boats, or in the interior of the house. Blades of miscanthus grass may be tied around the neck of a bean paste jug (misogami). Spirits, plentiful at this time, are frightened away by the patches of grass and will not enter. The young, while not believing in this, acquiesce to avoid making the old angry.

When a death anniversary is being celebrated, there may be a blade of miscanthus, a rice straw, or a knotted blade of grass on the top of a box of candies or sweet meats to prevent the intrusion of evil spirits. A blade of grass (the san) is occasionally tied around the handle of a tea pot. For the first week after a family death, tea is served from a pot which has this blade of grass. But these are almost invariably the observances of the old and are only infrequently seen. These customs, observed in Hinatogawa, are said to survive among the very old in the other villages.

In Matsuda, a rice rope (shimenawa) was observed at one home. The rice rope, a Shinto symbol, is not common in Okinawan culture. This

789 824 rope was hung across the entrance of the family compound two times a year, on the 9th day of the 8th month, and on the 8th day of the 12th month. Along the rope, there were knotted blades of grass, also the san plant. The purpose is to frighten away evil spirits and evil doers. One peculiarity of this twisted rice rope is that 283 it is made in a different manner from the ordinary rope. The usual rope is a twist made by rolling the fibre between the palms to the right or away from the body. In this special rope, the roll is reversed and is to the left or toward the body. It is difficult for a person already skilled in the regular method. This villager told of going to two noro [193] priestesses in the village of Yabu who specialized in teaching this method of making ropes. The husband and the wife received instruction, paying about ¥40 for it because the wife believed in the efficacy of the practice. Each year at the proper times, the husband now makes the special rope himself.

787 791 184 Some fortune telling practices shade into religious beliefs, just as religious customs have also included soothsaying and divination. The noros and the Buddhist priests formerly practiced some fortune telling. There were no fortune tellers in any of the villages studied, but villagers occasionally consult them. Here, too, the patronage comes largely from the old and from the women. Younger people, if they know about them, regard these practices as superstitions unworthy of belief. The word meishin (superstition) is frequently heard among the young in describing customs and beliefs of the old. The sign of the fortune 791 teller (sanjinsō) is the Chinese character for three written three [212] times. These characters are said to signify the three states of existence, pre-natal, the present, and the afterlife, on all of which the fortune teller is well versed. Those in Hanashiro and Minatogawa who wish to consult a fortune teller go to Itoman; those in Matsuda go to Nago. The cost is usually from ¥40-50 a visit. Typical reasons for a consultation with a fortune teller are: (1) to find out if an ill person will become well, (2) among the fishermen, to find out if the fishermen will return when an unexpected storm has arisen, (3) to discover if a present unhappiness has been caused by the evil deed of an ancestor and if this can be corrected, and (4) to find out the lucky days for such undertakings as marriages, building a house, or beginning new phases of construction.

782 774 Old women may utter a prayer on seeing a child fall, fearing that the child's spirit might escape because of surprise or fright. (This was observed in Minatogawa).

778 In Matsuda, there were shelves for burning charcoal sticks in some of the numerous caves in the area. The nature of the worship could not be ascertained, but they may be offerings to deities of the cave.

514 [776] 782 178 Worship and prayers in the toilet seem to have completely disappeared. There were no personified toilet gods. The toilet apparently was the place in which thanks were given that a place for excrement had been provided. In all the villages, it was said to be an old belief which has now died out. There was no shelf or special place of worship in the toilet.

Although a number of important shrines and worship places are located in the Kawata area, the main shrine is in Taira.

To this tranquil area the activities of World War II brought a great upheaval. Although the main stream of refugees from the south, following threats of United States troups' invasion, did not reach this northern area, Japanese guerilla forces settled in the hills of Higashi township. This, and the constant warnings from the Japanese of the "terrors" of American occupation, caused the population of all villages to take refuge in the mountains, carrying along what few possessions they could, including livestock. Families were separated and individuals lived in constant fear of soldiers from both sides. Nightly excursions to the fields to harvest whatever could be found helped to maintain a meager diet. It is characteristic of the stresses of this period that among the children of central Taira only one was born in 1945.

The war ended for Taira people when American troops had cleared the northern areas of Japanese troops. In this action several villages were destroyed, among them Taira. The present economic struggle of Higashi township, an area which was always handicapped by lack of farmland and poor soil, is partly due to the war. On the other hand, the demand for lumber for an island-wide reconstruction program lent a temporary boom to the economy. In the process, however, forests which had been heavily cut before the war fell prey to rapid and poorly planned cutting. At present the whole township is in the throes of economic readjustment.

In the past 50 years, Taira, like the rest of Okinawa, has sent some of its overflow of population to various areas in the world, including Japan, and especially to the industrial areas of Kobe and Osaka, Saipan, and Brazil. At least five of the families in central Taira lived either in Japan or the Pacific Islands and returned shortly after World War II. Emigrants to Brazil have stayed with the exception of one prominent person who returned to Taira several years before the war. Some of the families lived as many as 18 or 20 years abroad, and several children in the study were born in Japan and returned to the village as infants. Among the villagers are many who have served in the Japanese Army in Asia or in the South Seas.

The repatriation of these families does not seem to have caused any serious disturbances to the village, since many people were killed during the war and several families moved to the city. An exodus to the outlying areas of the village also provided room for returnees, so, although rice land is scarce, there is still some uncultivated farmland, admittedly mostly of poor quality.

The community is dispersed. In the outlying parts, as far as 2 miles

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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793 lives like other villagers, spending most of her time in the fields and around her home. She has children and grandchildren, but the father of her children no longer lives in Taira. She regards the continuation of the old ceremonies as her holy duty even though she has to do without most of the accustomed material support from the village and [358] in spite of disbelief and lack of participation. She has sought in vain [346] to have the village make necessary repairs on the simple village shrine near the township office and on the little hut where the ancestral tablets of her predecessors are kept.

793 While many of the former ceremonies have been discontinued, the 782 priestess is still called on to officiate at house-building ceremonies, to purify the lot, to offer prayers when the beams are raised, and to con- [342] duct the dedication when the house is finished. If the owner is mov- [776] ing out of an old house, the priestess notifies the fire deity so that he [778] will follow to the new abode. On other occasions the priestess conducts prayers at the village shrine or at one of the other sacred places near the village. Many of the prayers are succorant—requesting the aid and blessing of the gods in accomplishing a certain goal. In general, as Lebra has pointed out (1958), ceremonies of asking for help are more numerous and elaborate than thanksgiving ones.

[312] On New Year's morning the priestess prays at the water well. Since [178] so many ceremonies have been abbreviated and are no longer carried out in traditional detail, the priestess apologizes for short cuts in her prayers. If she fails to offer prayers in all prescribed spots, she pacifies [794] the deities by facing in the direction of the sacred place where the [787] ceremony should have been conducted. Although the priestess is clearly best qualified to enter into communication with the deities, many older women seem to possess such power also, and if the priestess' assistants are not present, another older woman can function as her helper.

782 For these ceremonies food for offerings is contributed by the village. 788 The priestess, in a white gown, kneels, flanked by her assistants, also [262] in white, in front of a tray of sake, rice, or other food for the deities. Charcoal incense sticks are burned while brief prayers asking the [533] deities for a successful crop, thanking them for a harvest, or whatever is appropriate to the occasion are mumbled. On certain occasions the women sing chants. After these ceremonies, the priestess, her assistants and the few others present, usually old women, share the food offerings.

796 One of the most dramatic ceremonies is held on Boat Race Day in 793 lunar June. Priestesses from several villages gather near Taira. During the ceremony the Taira priestess stands in the middle of a circle formed by the other priestesses and helpers, beating a drum as the

women chant. The tempo becomes more and more frenzied, and at a certain moment a bell rings. Nobody knows who rings it, and no amount of questioning elicited any information other than that this was done by divine action.

Ancestral worship is equally important in the life of Taira people. Each house of an oldest son has a shelf with a shrine in the main living room. On this shelf the family keeps the ancestral tablets, each representing a deceased ancestor of a recent period. The tablets for whole family lines are kept on the shelves of the main houses. Through this system a family maintains continuity between the living and the dead. Although a deceased person is believed to become a buddha or a god who ascends to heaven, his presence is still felt by the living relatives. If they fail to make the required offerings on the first and fifteenth day of each lunar month, or otherwise neglect religious duties toward the ancestor, misfortune may come to the family. At the same time, the worship of common ancestors holds branches of the larger kin groups together.

No village adult died during our stay, but the funeral practices for adults described by Glacken (1955) and Pitts et al. (1955) for other villages in Okinawa are similar. Seven years is the age limit for a child burial, which is simple and does not require attendance of people other than immediate relatives and perhaps one or two neighbors.* During the study an 8-year-old boy died from an illness and was given a full funeral, which is similar to that of adults.

The funeral must take place at the first outgoing tide after the body has been prepared and dressed. Accompanied by family, residents of the ward, and mourners from other parts of the village whose number depends on the prominence of the dead, the body is carried on a simple, open litter to the tomb area just west of the central village (see map 2). Women feel free to show their emotions, while men remain outwardly calm. Until decomposition takes place, the body remains in a tomb used by the whole village for temporary entombment. Like other village ceremonies, funerals are less elaborate now than they once were, perhaps to the relief of all concerned, since death is highly anxiety provoking, and nobody feels comfortable during the prayers and the ritual farewell to the corpse at the tomb. The participants receive a cup of sake before leaving the tomb area to cleanse them of the pollution of death. Some people still prefer to return to the village by a different route so that the spirit of the dead person will be fooled and unable to follow.

* The reason for this is possibly that the younger child has not yet fulfilled his filial obligations.

765 After death, memorial services are held in the home of the deceased
769 every seventh day until the 49th day when a more elaborate ceremony
782 concludes this period, and a permanent tablet is installed on the house shrine. On this day, too, offerings to the deceased change from white rice to red-colored rice, indicating the end of the mourning period. From now on, observances in memory of the dead are held on the first, third, seventh, thirteenth, twenty-fifth, and thirty-third anniversary of death. These are small family affairs at which special food is prepared and offered at the shrine before it is consumed.

765 The body is left in the tomb for at least three years until a propitious day when the whole village decides to wash the bones of all those who have died within the preceding three to seven years. On Bone Washing Day little groups of family members gather around the coffin. They take out the bones, clean them, wrap them in a white cloth and place
[778] them in an urn. Women do all the cleaning of bones because it is be-
[152] lieved that they have more power to expel the evil. They weep freely,
[852] and even some men find it hard to restrain their emotions. Young children are kept away from the tomb area at this time. The urns are then placed inside the family tomb, which has been opened for this purpose. Remains other than bones are burned with the coffin.

769 Every lunar March ancestral services take place at the tombs, at-
782 tended by many members of the kin groups to whom each tomb belongs. Some come from the city or other villages for this occasion, including women who have married into another kin group. This celebration of the dead is more serious than other religious events. Offerings of sake and special delicacies are made and then eaten by the family group. One family, sitting in picnic style around the tomb after their prayers, even began to sing and dance—probably to the delight of the ancestors who in their life must have enjoyed many a good feast and dance. Tombs of other relatives may also be visited for short prayers and other offerings.

775 Spirits of the dead are harmful only if the deceased is not from the
784 village. For this reason new residents formerly could not bury their
766 dead near the village. Even now, recent settlers in the central village have no tombs and keep their dead in urns in a cave, and the residents
[764] of outlying houses or field houses have a separate tomb area altogether. If a stranger happens to die in the village, measures are taken to prevent his spirit from doing harm. The body of a fisherman from southern Okinawa was brought to shore after a storm. There it was left for several hours on the beach under a tent in the hot sun until relatives arrived in a hired car to take the body home. Even then peo-

21Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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In the houses of first sons there are family altars upon which memorial tablets of family ancestors are placed. Children from these homes are told that their deceased grandfathers are now divine beings and are watching them. In one such family a 4-year-old boy was told by his mother that, since he was naughty, the divine ancestor would punish him. She pointed to the picture of his deceased grandfather and the memorial tablets on the altar. The little boy looked up to the shelf and then to his mother. "That's only a memorial tablet," he said sneeringly.

Not many children are as skeptical as this 4-year-old. A hunchbacked storyteller sometimes comes to Taira. This man is a preacher for a Japanese sect which combines Japanese nationalistic teachings and concepts of proper conduct and healthful living with a belief in a supreme being. He appeals to children and reinforces the belief in the sanctioning power of God. Occasionally a Christian missionary visits the village, and the children look forward to his bible readings, which also reinforce the belief. In addition, the children of the two Christian families help to caution others, warning of divine omnipresence and knowledge.

Shaming and ridicule as techniques of socialization are used to a fair extent. An older child's shortcomings may frequently be compared with a younger's achievements. However, some form of verbal lashing is usually accompanied by direct physical punishment, whether it be merely a slap on the buttocks, a crack on the head, or a whipping.

Several mothers summed up their flexibility in handling their children by saying, "I have so many children and it seems that each one is different in some way. For some children one thing works and for others you have to think of other ways. You cannot scold this one because she is so sensitive. The boy you cannot scold because he would get so angry he would not be able to understand the wrong he did."

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that mothers in Taira, for the most part, do not spend as much time with their children as do their counterparts in a more wealthy village. Their work day is long and strenuous. They return home exhausted and impatient. During the long rainy spells, when work in the fields and mountains is impossible, mothers have to stay home more often than usual. At such times they manifest an irritability with respect to the numerous demands children make upon them that can be attributed partly to the fact that their long absence from home during a normal work day makes them forget children's cravings for attention; the loss of income during bad weather just increases their impatience.

Moreover, during the last days of the battle and for a period of nearly a year afterwards the Yamada people, like most other villagers in the vicinity, lived a concentration-camp sort of existence in the very crowded and unsanitary city of Ishikawa. Then when they returned to their village they had to rebuild their houses from materials given by the Americans and from salvage. This experience undoubtedly had a bad effect on morale and perhaps also on standards of cleanliness. Yet Yamada appears to be a cleaner village than many seen in Southern Okinawa. This may be because of its less dense concentration of houses and its fairly good water system.

Economic factors can be summed up in the single word "poverty". The most modern knowledge and the best intentions are not sufficient if one has to carry water from a distance, has no money for soap, and has little strength left after the daily grind of making a living.

## 3. The Supernatural and Disease

The Okinawans, like all peoples, have a large body of traditional knowledge about the ills of the body and what to do about them. As among many peoples with little contact with Western science, a great many illnesses are attributed to causes that we would call supernatural. Thus before one can understand the Okinawan view of diseases one must understand some of the Okinawan concepts of the supernatural.

**Concepts of the Supernatural** The living human being, according to Okinawan belief, contains two entities, the mabui (or mabuyaa, possibly related to Japanese 'mamori', "guardian") and the shii (pos. ident. with Japanese 'sei', "essence"). These correspond to the Western concept "soul". According to some informants the two are the same, but then further conversation reveals a difference in usage that must reflect a difference in concept. It appears that the mabui is a discrete entity capable of being dislodged from the body without death resulting immediately. The shii on the other hand appears to have more the nature of a force that can be augmented or diminished.

What happens after a person dies is not altogether clear (see also Chapter V). According to some he becomes a "Buddha" (Japanese 'hotoke'), according to others he becomes a "god" (Japanese 'kami-sama') and ascends to Heaven. This happens if all goes well, if the person dies in a normal manner and has left no important task undone, and if his family makes the proper offerings. However, if such is not the case, he may become a ghost and haunt this world. Several terms are used for dead persons in this latter form---yanamung ("bad thing"), yanakaji ("bad wind"), majimung (?), shininchu ("dead person"), shinigami ("dead god"), shinimabui ("dead mabui"). The last term, shinimabui, contrasts with ichimabui,("live mabui"), used for the displaced mabui of a living person. All of these terms seem to mean the same thing, the dead who are not cared for and who are therefore a potential danger.

The dead who are cared for are said to ascend to Heaven (in Japanese, 'Ten ni agaru'), but they may also be present in the tomb and at

the ancestral tablets, since they receive offerings and worship at both places. The spirits of the ancestors present in the tablets are called ugwansu (probably literally "masters of worship"). The existence of the dead in Heaven seems rather unclearly defined. In speaking of the dead, people much more frequently use the term "yonder world" (Japanese 'ano yo'), which seems to refer to a realm co-existent with this world, different from it in form but not necessarily remote in space. It is my impression that "yonder world" refers to an unseen spiritual world around the living rather than any distant Heaven or Land of the Dead. It may be that different entities go to different places, as in Chinese eschatology, where each individual has two souls, the "hun" which goes to Heaven as a god, and the "p'o" which stays on Earth as a demon. But the data at hand do not reveal such a neat structure. Or perhaps the concept "Heaven" is merely a recent introduction from China and not yet wholly integrated with native concepts.

The distinction between spiritual beings who formerly had a human existence and spiritual beings who are wholly non-human is also not always clear. In every village there are numerous ugwanju, places of worship. These seem to be associated with the founder of the village or the aji or local official---his tomb, the wells where he got water, the hilltop where he worshipped, etc. Non-human spirits probably are believed to inhabit these places, other than the tombs, but it is my impression that most of the worship is directed toward the deceased persons, and indeed that most important local spirits are in fact deceased persons who have become deified.

On the other hand, there are spirits associated with the house and yard that are clearly non-human. The most important of these is the Fii-nu-kang, "God of the Fire", or U-kama, "Oven". (These two terms may represent two historically separate concepts, but they are now used interchangeably.) The Fire God is represented by a small vessel containing ashes that stands above or behind the oven in nearly every house. It may even be found behind the little kerosene stoves used by city rooming-house dwellers. This vessel is made and attended by the mistress of the house. When a branch house is established she makes a vessel of earth or obtains one and partly fills it with ashes from the Fire God of the main house. The offerings, among some Yamada families, consist of incense and three cups of cooked rice offered on the first and fifteenth of every lunar month, before similar offerings are made to the ancestral tablets. On the 24th day of the 12th lunar month the Fire God is said to ascend to Heaven to return again on New Year's. One old woman explained that the Fire God (Fii-nu-kang-ganashii) is "like a policeman" and Heaven (U-kami-ganashii) is "like the government"; when the Fire God goes up it reports whatever the family has done wrong during the year.

Offerings are also made on occasion to the gate, the well, the corners of the yard, the pigsty-privy, and elsewhere. The "Pigsty-privy God" (Fuuru-nu-kami) was formerly of importance especially in treating cases of loss of mabui.

Although Okinawans occasionally refer to Heaven or the Gods of Heaven (J. 'Ten no kami-sama'; Okinawan U-kami-ganashii, etc.), the concept does not seem to be well defined. The clearest statement heard on the subject was the one just mentioned in connection with the Fire God. Since the dead, or some of them, rise to Heaven, the term "Gods of Heaven" may include them, but there are evidently other greater beings too. These may be identical with the figures of the native origin myth. But aside from a few enthusiasts, mainly local historians and shamans (yuta), few Okinawans seem informed about or concerned with native cosmology, or any other. This may in part be the result of a generation or so of Japanese education with educators attempting to take the Japanese mythology seriously and making Okinawan mythology jibe with it. But it is more likely that this lack of concern with Heaven is due rather to an old tendency common in East Asia to settle matters at the local level without bothering the higher authorities, in dealing with both political problems and spiritual problems.

In the Okinawan universe there are also a few earthly beings with supernatural power. The akamataa is a real species of non-poisonous snake. But it is believed to be able to change itself into a handsome young man, in which form it seduces unwitting young women. One young woman who was seduced is said to have given birth to a whole tubful of baby akamataa.

The kijimunaa is a wholly mythical being but seems to belong more in the natural world. According to some it lives in old trees, but according to others it is a sea-being who lives on fish and shellfish and who will become the helper of a fisherman who makes friends with it. Regardless of habitat, the kijimunaa is believed to approach a sleeping person and sit on his chest, nearly suffocating him and preventing him from crying out. Apparently the being is not dangerous but merely annoying.

Another being that is feared is the tamagai or 'hidama', "fireball". This was described in Yamada as a light that appears at certain times as an omen. However, in a village in Southern Okinawa it is regarded as the cause of fire. Since it is a female being the young men of this village drive it away by forming a procession and marching through the village shouting "Hoo hai!" ("Your vulva's showing.")

The Itoman people speak of the ja or 'ryu', the "dragon". This being lives in the sea or the clouds; its tail is the whirlwind; its feces, if one is fortunate enough to find them; are like coal tar and are a very valuable medicine. Other Okinawans seem to regard this as something only the Itoman people know about.

One more concept is perhaps worth mentioning; this is shiji. Certain places, the sacred hilltop of the village, etc., are said to be shiji-dakasang, "high in shiji", and therefore to be approached with respect. It is also said of persons, especially those believed to be destined to become religious practitioners. The term shiji evidently signifies a sort of supernatural power that adheres to places and people, perhaps like the Oceanian concept "mana". Haring has suggested that the Japanese concept

778 171 'kami' is like the Oceanian "mana", a supernatural power that enters natural objects or persons.[1] Whatever may be the case in Japan, the Okinawan kami refers to definite beings, discrete entities, and not to a force. However, the concepts shiji and perhaps shii may be mana-like.

753 Causes of Disease Okinawans frequently use these concepts of the supernatural in their interpretation of the causes and proper treatment of illnesses of the body. Illness may be caused, they believe, by loss of the shii or the mabui, by the harmful inclinations of other living persons and of dead persons, and by offences to ancestors and other spirits that are ordinarily helpful.

753 774 [778] Gradual withdrawal of the shii may cause illness or death. A pregnant woman is warned not to attend a funeral or a bone-washing because the shii of the unborn child may be drawn into the tomb. A sudden jolt or a scare may cause the mabui to be dislodged and this will result in a feeling of weakness and, if the mabui is not replaced, perhaps ultimately death. Treatment of loss of mabui is often practiced by old women. One woman who had treated her grandchildren on numerous occasions said that she laid on a table offerings including salt, rice, water, and a dish containing seven stones; then she took a garment of the sick child, prayed at the entrance to the house, and called the child's name. The mabui of the child then entered the garment and when she put the garment on the child the mabui reentered the child. Formerly she would have prayed at the pigsty-privy, but [776] it no longer exists. One of her sons gave the interpretation that the pigsty-privy god being the lowest god knew the whereabouts of the lost mabui and he informed the ancestral spirits who were able to bring it back to the garment.

[775] The most serious cases of loss of mabui are caused by the actual theft of the mabui by dead persons, who are said to take the mabui to the tomb. As I have already mentioned, this may happen when a baby sneezes. Treatment of this type of soul-loss probably requires the services of a [756] yuta, a sort of shaman. The yuta is said to be able to see the living person's mabui before the tomb, in the form of the person. If the form is facing this world and looks sad there is a chance of recovery, but if it is facing the tomb and looks happy, the patient will probably die. But in spite of the occasional serious nature of loss of mabui, I have observed young boys when startled jokingly cry out "mabuyaa, mabuyaa!" as if to call back their displaced mabui. And it is said that some persons jokingly pretend to scoop it up and pour it back into the body through the head. However, the joke may serve to relieve actual tensions that exist after a sudden shock.

754 Little information was obtained on the harm that can be done by a living person with ichijama. According to Yanagida[2] the ichijama is the soul of a woman who can send it to possess a person or object in order to

1 Haring, 1946, p. 221 and elsewhere.

2 Yanagida, 1951, p. 30.